

## REMARKS

Favorable consideration of this application is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-26 are currently active in this case. Claims 1, 9, and 22 have been amended by way of the present amendment.

In the outstanding Final Office Action, Claims 1-26 were rejected under 35 USC 103 as being unpatentable over various combinations of Murai (US Pat. 4,962,421), Takahashi (JP 09-252413), and Ikemoto (US Pat. 5,902,053), and other references.

Applicants appreciatively acknowledge the courtesy of interviews granted by Examiner Chau in November 2003. The attached claim set is consistent with the claims discussed at the interviews and the Examiner indicated they appeared to be allowable over the cited art.

Applicants respectfully traverse the above rejections under 35 USC 103, but now respectfully request full review of the new claims presented herein.

Consequently, no further issues are believed to be outstanding, and it is respectfully submitted that this case is in condition for allowance. An early and favorable action is respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees (or credit any overpayment) associated with this communication and which may be required under 37 CFR §1.78 to Deposit Account No. 50-2603, **referencing Attorney Docket No. 351778.04300. A duplicate sheet is attached.**

Respectfully submitted,  
REED SMITH LLP

Dated: April 12, 2004

By: 

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